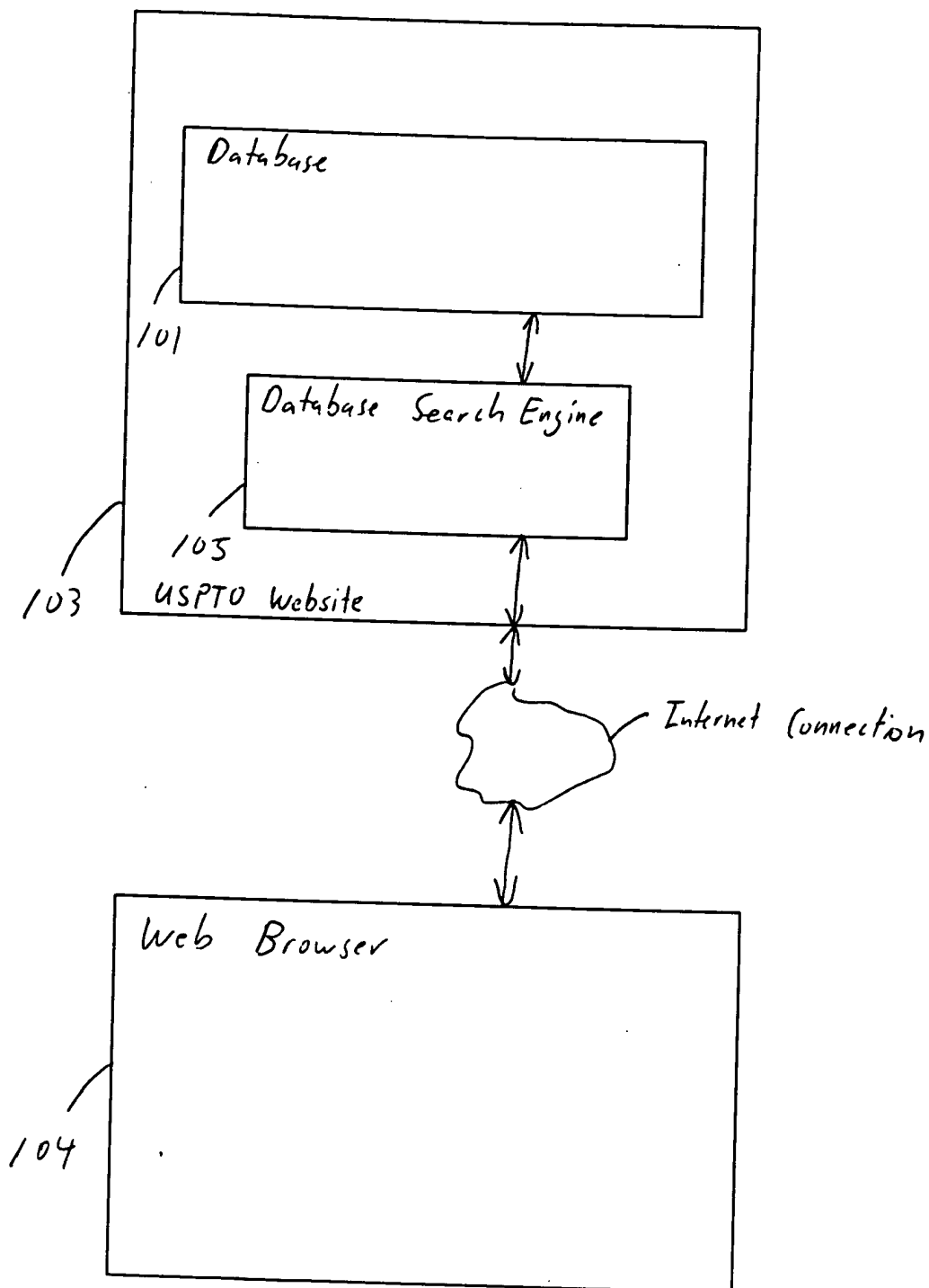


Fig. 1
(Prior Art)



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Fig. 2

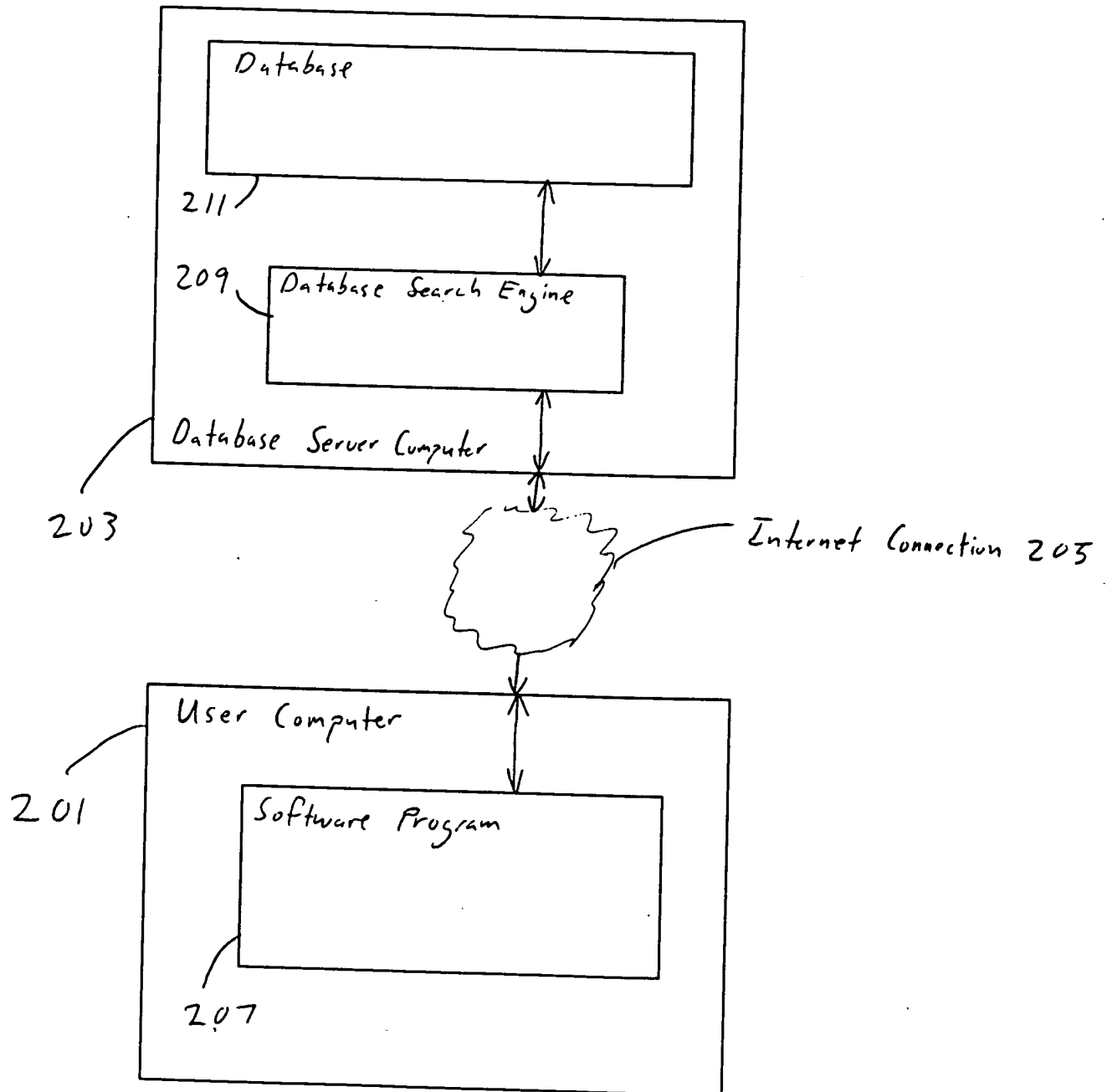


Fig. 3

Step 1. User inputs to Software Program 207 the patent number of the "patent under test" and directs the Software Program 207 to begin its "recursive" search.

Step 2. Software Program 207 sends a request via the Internet Connection 205 to the Database Search Engine 209 (through the Database Server Computer 203) to return the "patent under test" in Hyper Text Markup Language ("HTML") format.

Step 3. Database Search Engine 209 obtains the "patent under test" from the Database 211 in response to the request and returns the "patent under test" in HTML format to the Software Program 207 via the Internet Connection 205 (through Database Server Computer 203).

Step 4. Software Program 207 parses the HTML data corresponding to the "patent under test" and stores identifying data corresponding to each reference cited in the "patent under test". This stored identifying data is "generation n" data (where n is an integer that initially equals 1).

Step 5. Software Program 207 sends a request via the Internet Connection 205 to the Database Search Engine 209 (through the Database Server Computer 203) to return, in HTML format, patent k (where k is an integer initially equal to 1) identified by the "generation n" data.

Step 6. Database Search Engine 209 obtains patent k from the Database 211 in response to the request and returns patent k in HTML format to the Software Program 207 via the Internet Connection 205 (through the Database Server Computer 203).

Step 7. Software Program 207 parses the HTML data corresponding to patent k and stores identifying data corresponding to each reference cited in patent k. This stored identifying data is "generation n+1" data.

The value of k may then be incremented upward by 1 and Steps 5, 6, and 7 are repeated until all of the patents identified in the "generation n" data are requested by and returned to the Software Program 207.

The value of n may then be incremented upward by 1, the value of k may be reset to 1, and the process repeated (beginning at Step 5) for the "generation 2" data to produce "generation 3" data, and so on.

Step 8. Apply "rule-based" filtering.

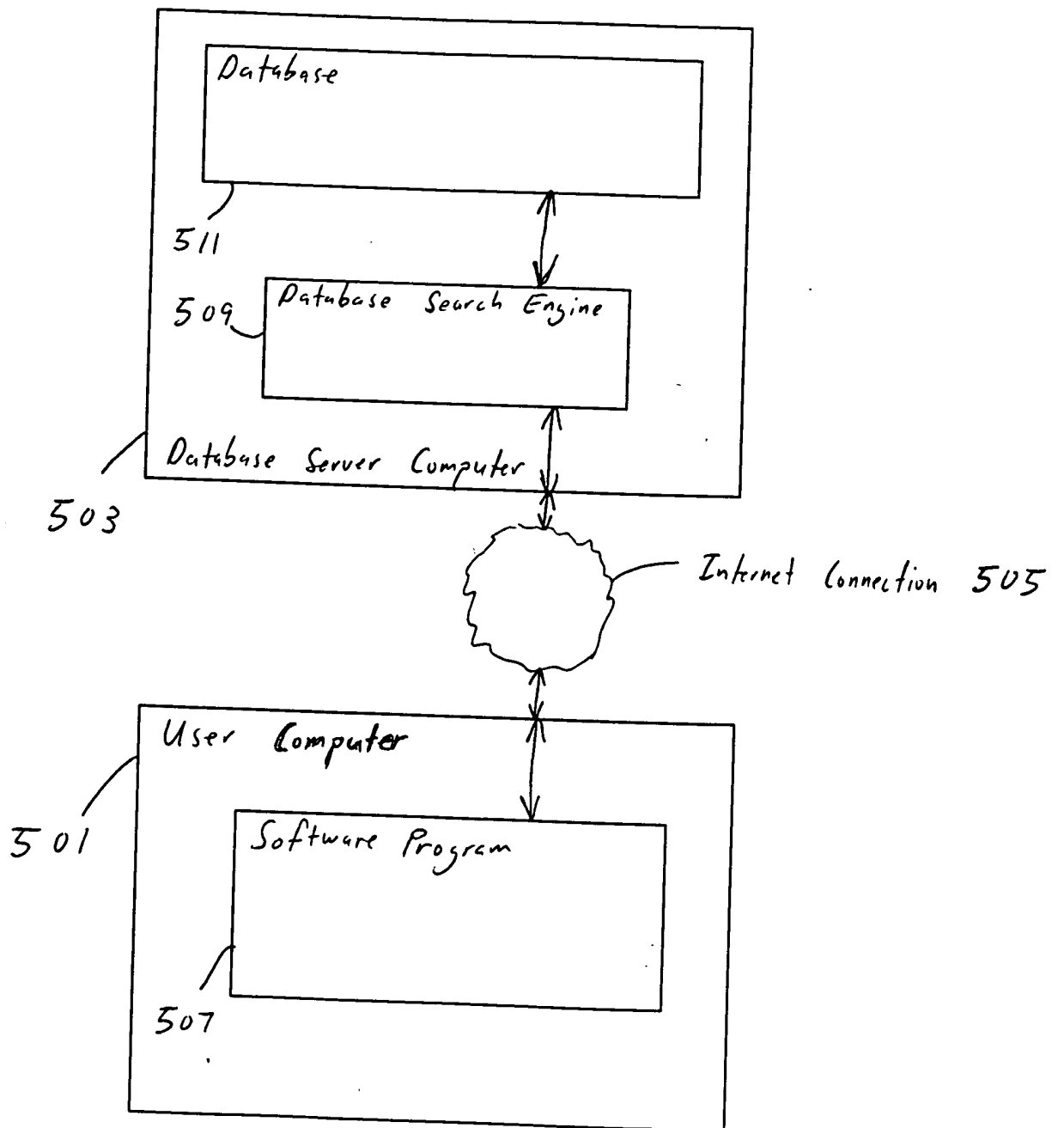
Step 9. Display identifying data corresponding to the patents found during the "recursive" search.

Fig. 4

References				
9,000,123	Jones et al.	June 1995	455/123	Relevant
8,345,123	Hanford et al.	May 1992	455/127	Relevant
7,887,333	Krantz et al.	May 1979	455/323	Relevant
7,002,009	Spencer	Feb. 1977	455/323	Non-Relevant
6,234,900	Paterson et al.	Aug. 1975	475/773	Relevant
8,777,333	Smith et al.	May 1991	455/323	Relevant
8,337,223	Williams	Dec. 1978	355/222	Non-Relevant
8,512,776	Larson et al.	April 1981	453/325	Relevant
7,185,452	Vinkler	Nov. 1976	453/165	Relevant

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Fig. 5



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Fig. 6

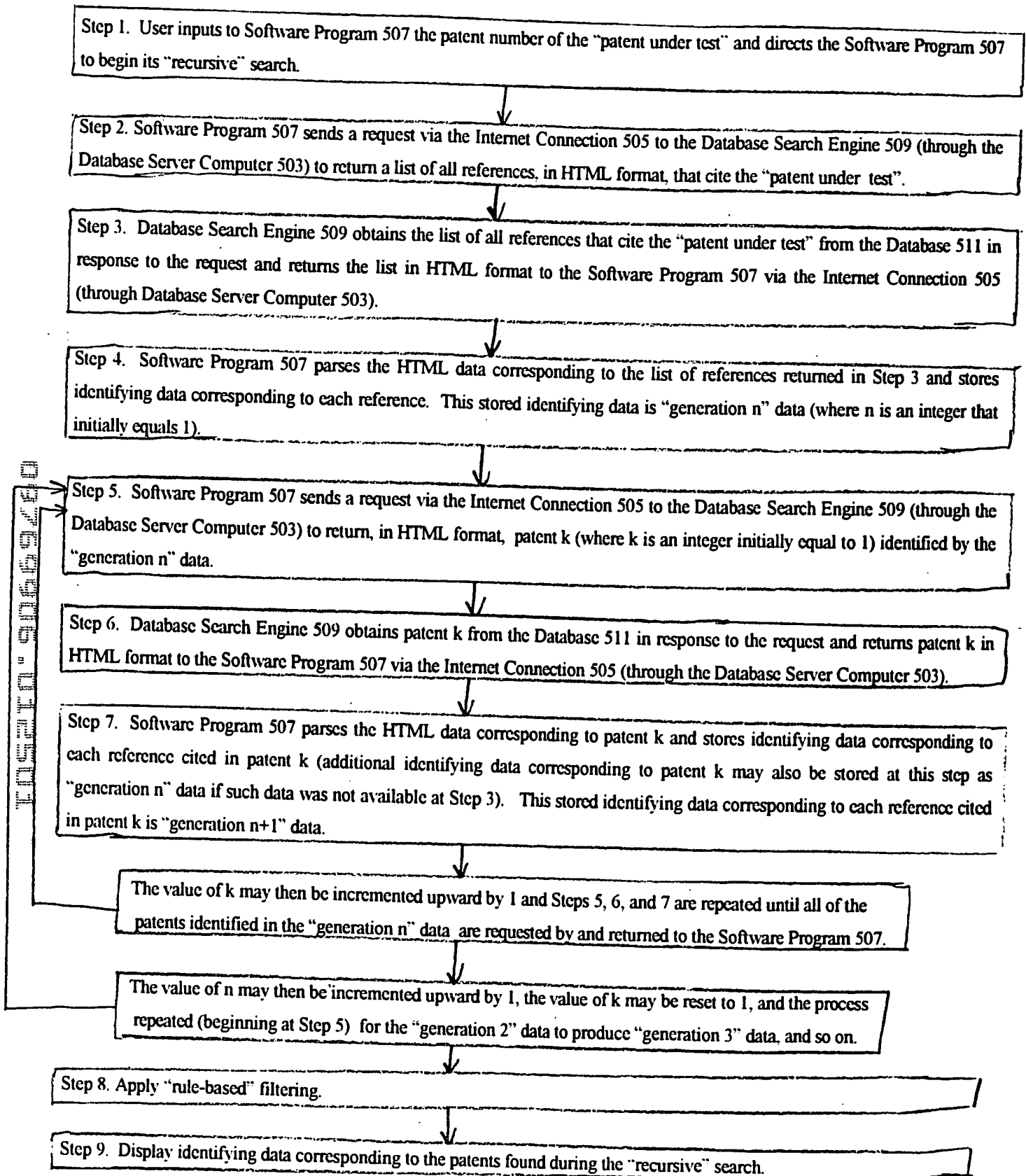
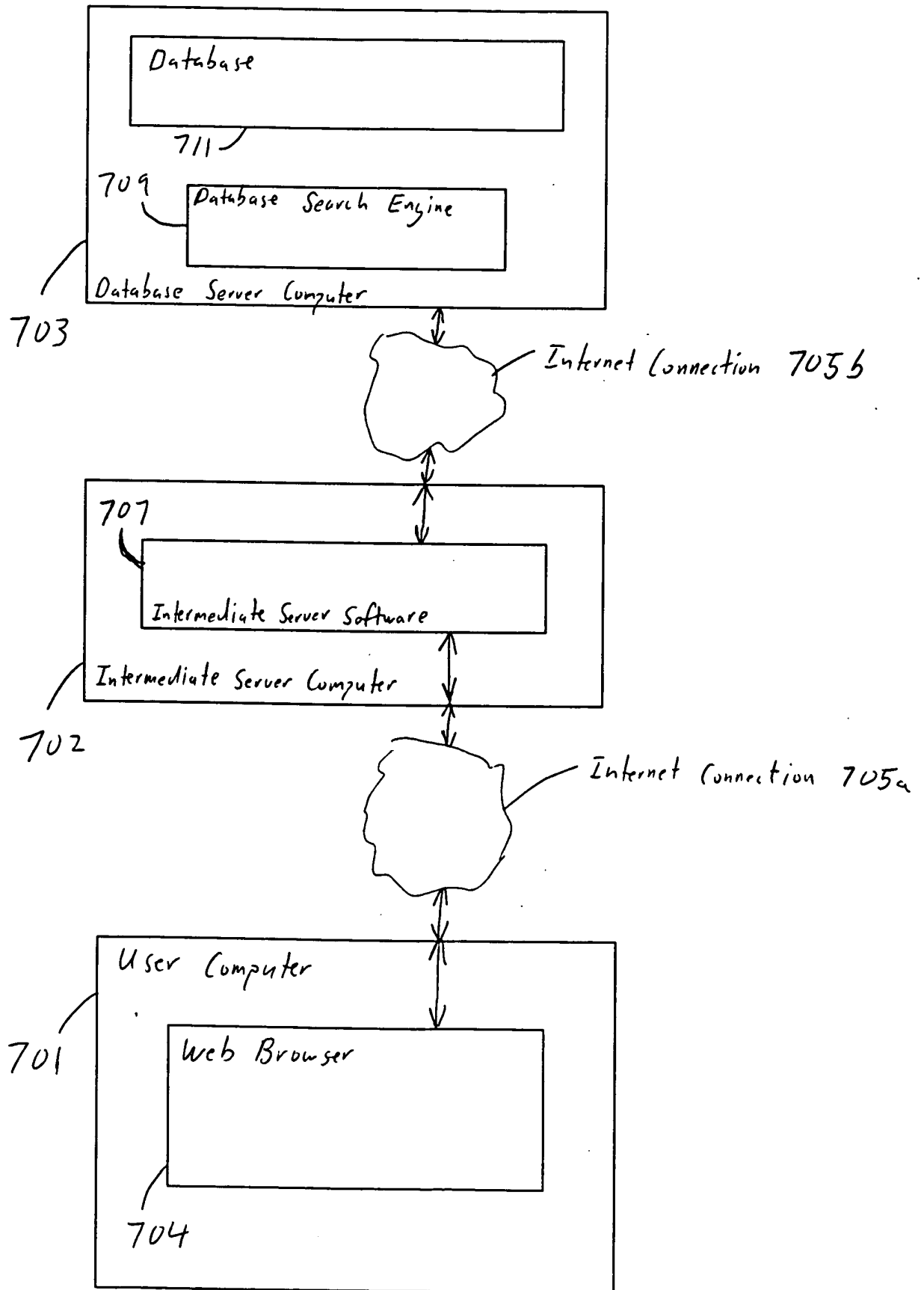


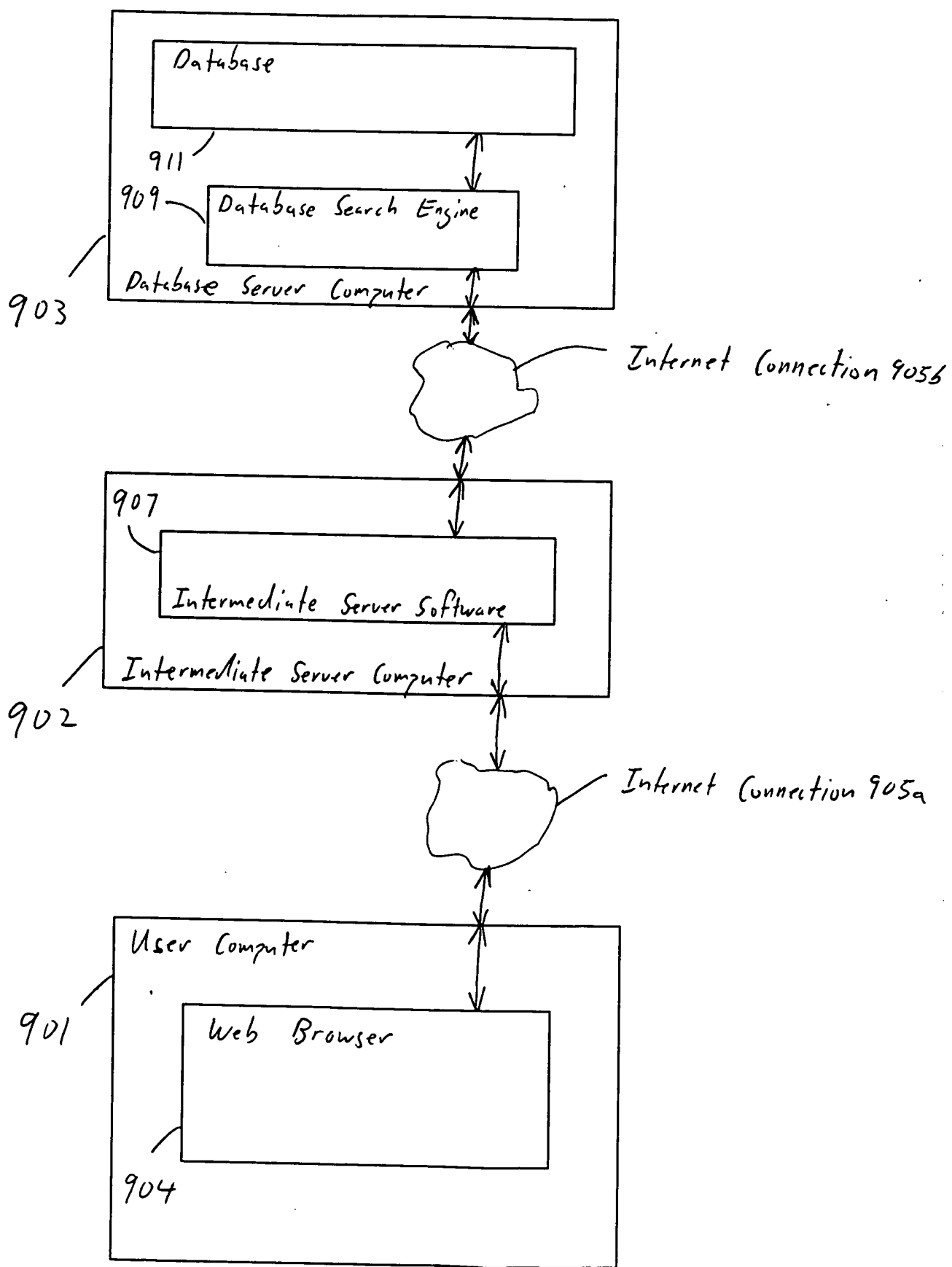
Fig. 7



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Fig. 9



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Fig. 10

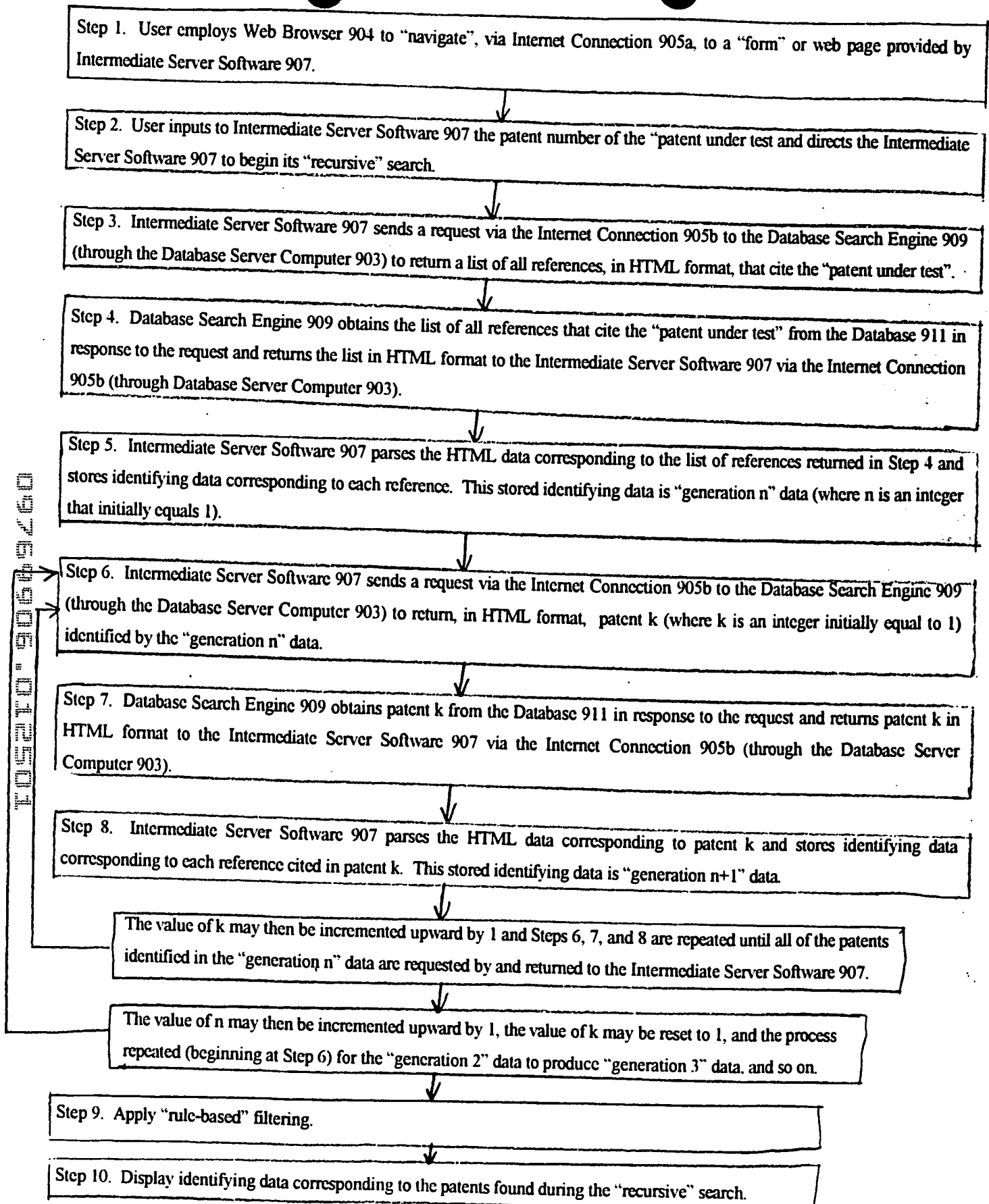


Fig. 11

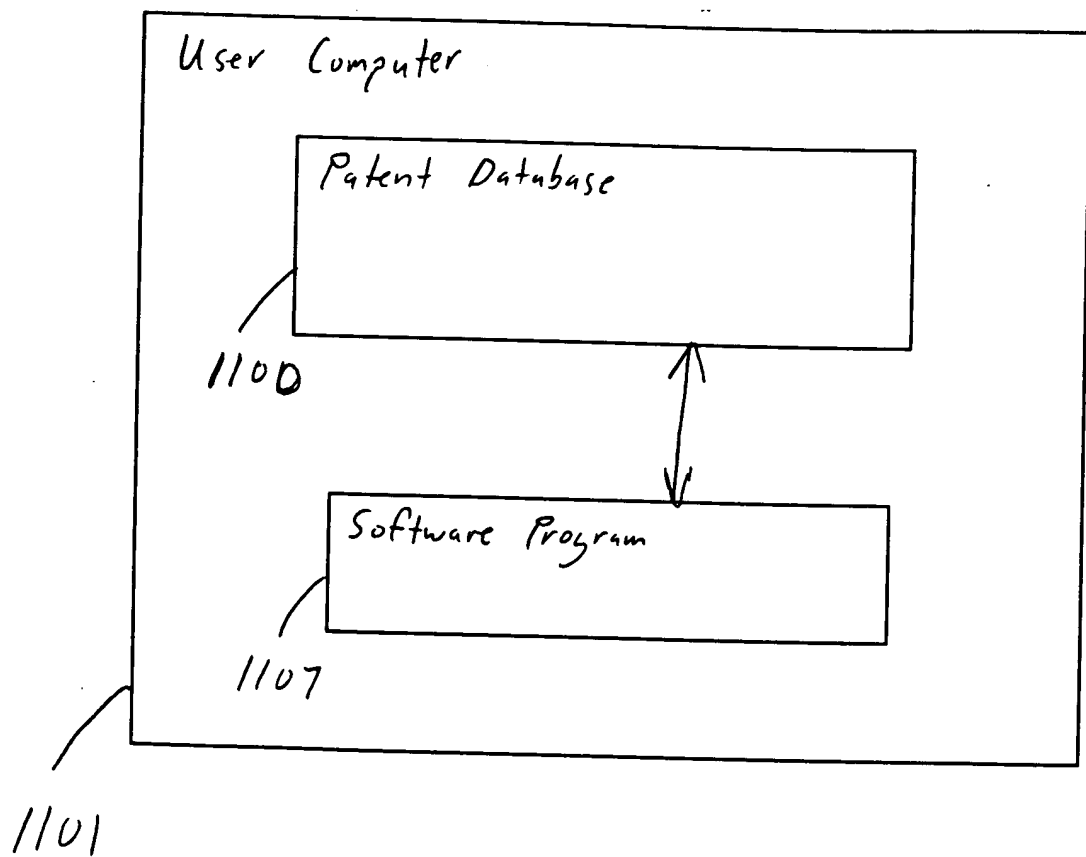


Fig. 12

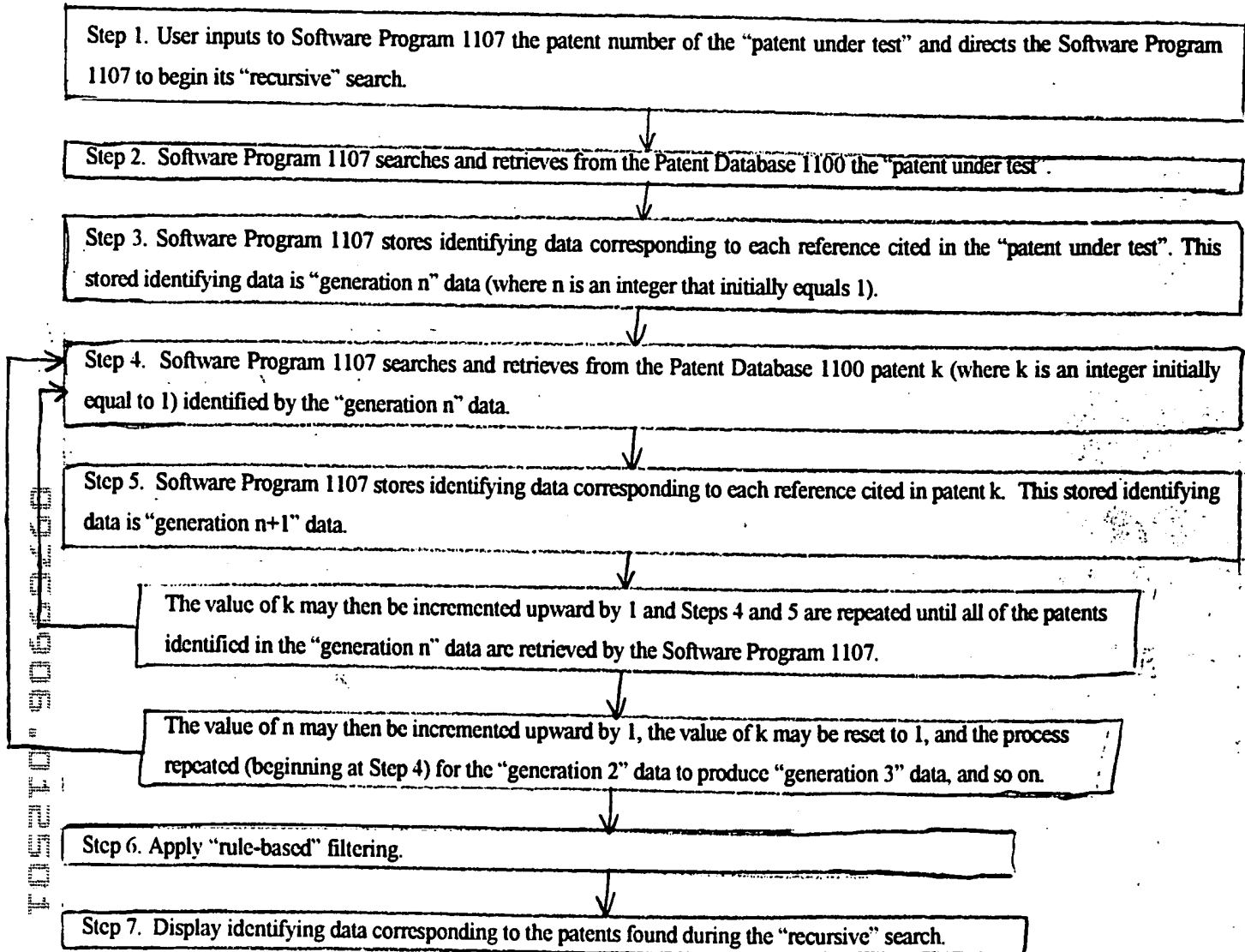
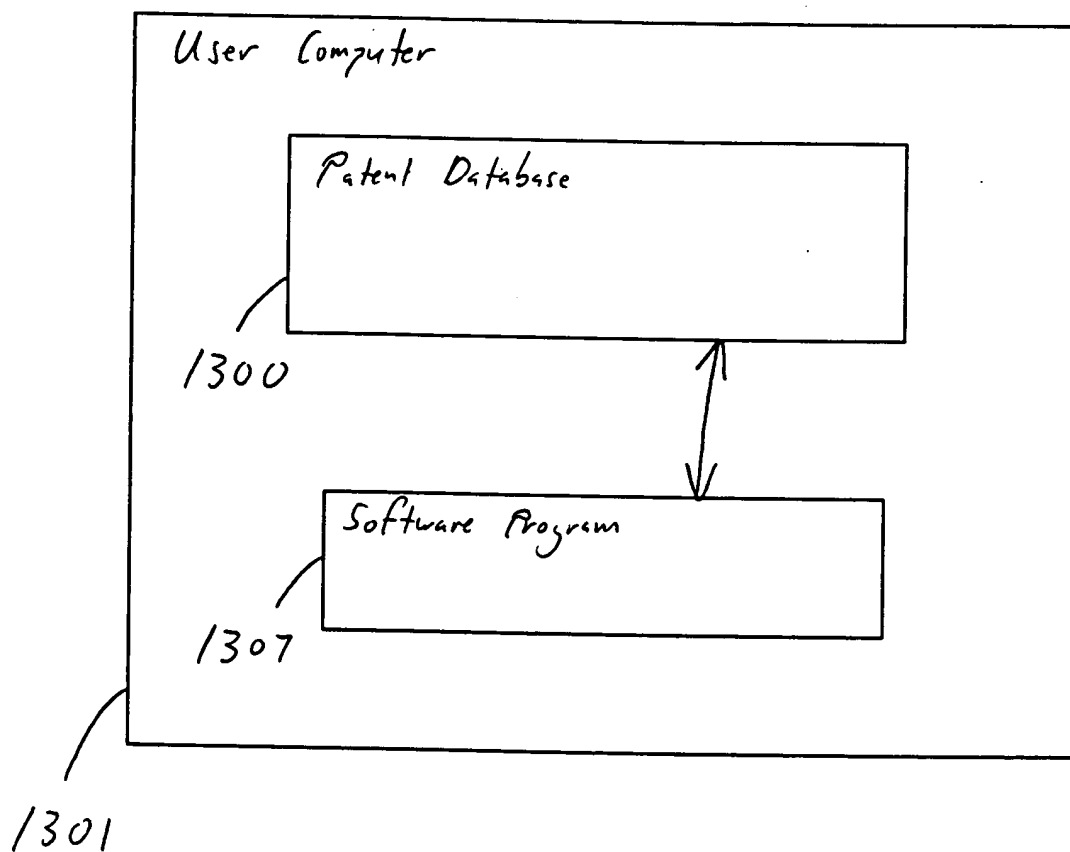


Fig. 13



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Fig. 14

